

From: REP STARK

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Subject: Questions on Community Corrections Cost Study

Colette and Maria,

I heard today that there were murmurings as to the legitimacy of the Cost Study for Community Corrections. Can you please assist me with the following questions?

1. What methodology was used for this study?

Successful completion of the **2018 Actual Cost Study (ACS)** required more than a year of planning, active participation of community corrections partners in all 36 counties, and statewide coordination and leadership from DOC. The 2018 ACS Planning and Implementation Workgroup, made up of Community Corrections Directors, Parole & Probation Officers, and support staff representing ten county community corrections agencies, in addition to representatives of DOC's Community Corrections Division and Research Unit, began meeting in September 2016. There are two components to an ACS: a **time study** and a **financial study**. The **time study** component, completed in fall 2017, included tracking time spent managing a randomly selected group of offenders on supervision in each of Oregon's 36 counties for a period of nine weeks. The **time study** was broken out into five categories, capturing offenders involved in pre-sentence assessment, intake, high/medium/low supervision, investigation, and prerelease planning. Time was recorded electronically and reported to DOC on a weekly basis. Each county's data was then compiled by DOC and returned for validation before being used in the overall **time study** calculation.

The **financial study**, considerably less time-intensive than the **time study**, involved gathering and compiling Fiscal Year 2018 budget detail by funding source from all 36 county community corrections agencies. Costs were broken out into four categories: supervision, sanctions, services, and treatment.

The data and information gathered from these two components of the ACS were then used by DOC to establish the current actual cost to provide case management services to Oregon's more than 30,000 offenders on supervision.

2. How does this methodology compare to cost studies done in the past?

The primary difference in the methodology of the most recent ACS and the previous one conducted in 2012, pertain to the **time study** portion. For the 2012 ACS, DOC used national **time study** data (included Oregon data) rather than conducting our own study. This decision was made for a variety of reasons, but ultimately led to the legislature rejecting 2012 ACS results. For this reason, DOC decided to return to the practice of conducting its own statewide **time study** as it did for the 2006 ACS. The only other differences in methodology pertained to a number of process improvements made to the **time study** portion of the ACS (addressed in question #4).

3. Were there any programs, services or funding streams included in this cost study that were not included in past cost studies?

No. The workgroup was very intentional about ensuring consistency with previous studies.

4. Were any changes or improvements made in this current cost study?

There were a number of improvements made to the **time study** portion of the most recent ACS, all of which were designed to increase data quality. Although the Statewide Planning and Implementation Workgroup was very careful to design the 2017 **time study** in such a way that

enabled comparison to previous studies (2006, 1993, et al.), the group incorporated a number of process improvements in an effort to improve study accuracy. Improvements included:

- *Offender-centric rather than PO-centric* – A statistically significant sample of offender cases were randomly selected in each of the categories studied by DOC's Research Unit. Previous time studies involved counties hand-picking POs whose caseloads were studied.
- *Incorporated all case management work* – The work of modern day offender case management is a collaborative effort between management, POs, PO Techs, Case Aides, and support staff. While not all tasks constitute case management work and therefore inclusion in the study, all stakeholders are responsible for individual pieces of the case management process.
- *Use of electronic data tracking and collection* – **Time study** data was collected and compiled electronically for the first time in 2017, significantly improving efficiency and data integrity. Previous studies involved the use of paper tracking instruments.
- *Statewide, face-to-face training* – Recognizing one of the keys to good data collection in a study of this size is clear and consistent instruction, a training group was formed for the purpose of developing and delivering in-person training to over 700 community corrections staff statewide.
- *Weekly troubleshooting* – Weekly statewide phone meetings were held throughout the study for the purpose of staffing unforeseen questions or concerns and ensuring statewide consistency in the response.
- *Painstaking data validation* – Individual county data was compiled and reviewed by DOC before being distributed to each county on a weekly basis for additional review and correction.

5. What was the state wide participation level in the most current cost study?

In terms of participation in the planning process, successful completion of the ACS required extensive collaboration between the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Oregon Association of Community Corrections Directors. The Statewide Planning and Implementation Workgroup was made up of 20 stakeholders representing 13 counties around the state and included Community Corrections Directors, PO Supervisors, and POs. DOC staff, tasked with coordinating the statewide effort, included members of the Research Unit who ensured randomized sample sizes were statistically significant. The workgroup met monthly for over a year to plan for the most robust community corrections **time study** ever conducted in Oregon.

In terms of participation in the study itself, all 36 counties were fully engaged in the entire process. A total of 50k individual case entries were made statewide during the 9 week **time study** portion of the ACS. Individual State ID (SID) numbers for all offender cases involved in the study were monitored by DOC to ensure appropriate entries were made on a weekly basis. An incredible 92 percent weekly average data entry rate was achieved statewide, with some counties reaching a 100 percent entry rate for all 9 weeks of the study. By the time data validation was complete, a 100% entry rate was achieved. Together, the coordinated efforts of DOC and community corrections staff around the state resulted in a study that far exceeded the quality and accuracy of previous such studies in Oregon.

6. Has the validity of this cost study been recognized by other entities?

The validity of the ACS has been recognized by previous Oregon legislative assemblies going back many years, and the overall methodology has remained largely the same. Even when the 2012 ACS results were rejected, the rejection was based on the data sources used (national vs Oregon **time study**), not the mechanics of the ACS itself. Additionally, DOC presented ACS methodology and outcomes to their peers around the nation at the American Parole & Probation Association's 2019 Winter Training Institute, which has continued to generate interest from a number of states wishing to conduct a similar study.

7. Is this study statutorily mandated and why?

ORS 423.486 requires DOC to conduct a statewide study every six years to determine the actual costs of providing management, support services, supervision and sanctions for offenders described in ORS 423.478(2). Outcomes of this study, known as the Actual Cost Study (ACS), are used to reestablish baseline expectations of time required to manage community corrections cases of various types and reset rates used to determine the budgeted costs of managing the community corrections population for the next three biennia.

8. Did this cost study take into account evidence based practices required under SB 267 (2003?)? Nationally, Oregon was an early adopter in the implementation of evidence based practices (EBP) in both treatment and case management, and we continue to be a leader in this work. The **time study** portion of the ACS would have captured the additional workload associated with the adoption of EBP in general.

9. Was the workload as a result of Justice Reinvestment accounted for in this cost study? Yes. The workload associated with direct case management and service delivery was incorporated in the **time study** portion of the ACS. With that said, a typical county JRI program is a collaborative effort of the local system partners and the workload performed by the other partners was not part of the ACS.

10. What were the resources that DOC provided to execute this cost study?

DOC provided extensive statewide leadership and coordination throughout the planning, training, implementation, data validation, and outcome assessment phases of the ACS. This work began over a year prior to the start of the **time study** portion of the ACS in 2016 and ran through completion and dissemination of the report findings in early 2018. Four DOC staff positions were heavily utilized during the study; two from the Community Corrections Division and two from Research.

11. Did the cost study elements follow standard methods consistent with state expectations and acknowledged research practices?

Yes. The diverse makeup of the statewide Planning and Implementation Workgroup was intended to ensure methods were consistent with expectations and acknowledged research practices. DOC's Research team was represented on the workgroup, in part, for this purpose.

12. Is there anything else you think that the legislature should know about the most recent cost study?

DOC and the workgroup worked hard to ensure the process was absolutely open and transparent from the planning stage until completion. From Parole and Probation Officers, County Directors, DOC's community corrections leadership and Research teams, to the Legislative Fiscal Office, everyone participated or was kept informed in the planning and vetting process from start to finish. The result was a valid, comprehensive study that included 100% participation from all partners in both the statewide **time study** and **financial study** components of the ACS.

While the overall price tag seems overwhelming, what the study revealed is an increased need of two dollars per client to right-size Community Corrections.